

A

REVIEW

OF THE

Affairs of *FRANCE*.

With Observations on TRANSACTIONS at Home.

Thursday, October 4. 1705.

PErhaps the last of these Papers may be taken for too much of a Banter upon the High Churchmen, when I pretend to Talk of Patience under the Disappointments, which I foresee are like to be their Portion, but I refer it to any Man to judge between us, Whether it is not more of a Banter, that one of the Learned Gentlemen has put upon the World in another *Oxford Weather-cock*, called, *An Affire Sermon*; The Meer *Aurum Fulminans* of the Party, wherein he took for his Text, *Stand fast, quit your selves like Men*; at which the Nation must needs make a little sport.

If he meant an Active quitting themselves like Men, it must seem to refer to Nature being rous'd against Principle; if he meant a Passive quitting themselves like Men, then 'tis but the same thing I am Talking of; and the Resolution that Gentleman Exhorts his Hearers to, is the same Patience I Talk off, and I leave them to Choose which part they please.

The Churches Danger is there wonderfully set forth, and all the Scare-crows of the Party extreamly magnified; and taking the Church, as he means it, their Courage and Resolution is indeed wanted, and all little enough; for Passive Valour is of the highest Nature, and requires the greatest Courage; therefore this *Oxford Jest*, and mine, seem to have the same Tendency, *viz.* to warn these Gentlemen to prepare with Patience and Resolution, to bear the Disappointments they must Expect.

From this Ungrateful Subject, I now proceed to answer another Question about these Gentlemen of the High Church, *viz.* Will they bring their Occasional Bill upon the Stage again, or no?

And that I may not Answer this Question so much by Guess, as some People may think, I must tell those Gentlemen, their Politicks appear weaker than they Imagine, in that they have not Concealed their Designs from

the World, enough to prevent us knowing beforehand what they drive at, and the Mischiefs they prepare, being Detected, are more than half prevented; I am therefore to acquaint the World, That the Occasional Bill, will not be brought on the Stage any more——Pardon my Explaining my self a little, by the Occasional Bill.

Here I mean an Occasional Bill, in the same Form and Figure that it was in before; and in that manner, I say, it will not be set on foot again; and this brings me to take Notice, That the Occasional Bill really had nothing in it, but what has been the Sense, and in the Design of the Party for above Thirty Years past, *viz.* To Exclude the *Dissenters* from all Trusts or Employments in the Government, that so they might with the more Ease Suppress them at last.

The failing of this Project, was the rise of the present Great Outcry of the Churches Danger; as if it were impossible the Church should stand, if the *Dissenters* do not fall; a Maxim raised by a Party, and current only in the Heads of those that wish with the *Dissenters* Destruction, the Ruine of the present Establishment, both in Church and State.

I allow these Gentlemen covet the Fall of the *Dissenters*, in order to their own Ecclesiastick Tyranny; but they have always found that State Tyranny must go with it, and only will support it, from whence we have seen, that these Gentlemen have always prompted the Breaches of our Liberty, by Politick State Invasions, *tho' hitherto God be thank'd, they have proved Impolitick ones to them*; that the Examples in the State might encourage those in the Church; and that one Tyranny might support another.

This very Just to observe from hence, that Church Tyranny always sunk with State Tyranny; and the Agents of one being fallen from their Power, the other fall of Course.

But to say the Church is less safe, because she is in the Hands of the Law, which permits her not to Tyrannize, or because she is under a Queen, and a Set of Rulers who have no Inclination to it, is to say the Church is in most Danger, when her Constitution is most exactly preserved, her Cannon obeyed, and when Head and Members make out hap-

py Conjunction, agreeing to act for the Church, according to her own Dictates and Principles, and not to make her a Fool to usher in Oppressions, Persecutions, and all sorts of Invasion of Property.

In order to bring back this Unhappy Regency of Church Politicks, Occasional Bills have been started, That the Church being made a Tool of State, might be the Hand-maid of Tyranny; the Queen, the Wisest and Best of the Bishops and Clergy, the Nobility and Gentry, by noted Majorities, have Declared themselves against the Design in general, and against this Act in particular; but the Party restless in the Prosecution of the first Design, and resolved to leave no Stone Unturn'd, that may Contribute to the Effecting it, have form'd, as I am told, a New Project to Drive that Nail that will go; and if they cannot obtain what they Desire, will satisfy themselves with what they can obtain.

In order to this Design, *they tell me*, the Design is formed to Dress this Monster up in New Cloaths, Painting the Devil White; that so presenting him to the World in new Colours, they may, if possible, Deceive even the *Elk*; if this Sham may pass upon the Age, and no Cunning will, I suppose, be wanting to promote it, they fancy they may obtain, if not the Bill it self, some Equivalent; which going down with less Difficulty, may either in time serve in stead of, or be Introductory to the Bill it self.

To this purpose I understand the Plot is laid, and I should be wanting to my Native Country, and lessen the General Design of this Paper, Calculated for the Publick Service, if I did not strip naked this May-game, this *Merry Andrew* of the High-Church, and show him to the World in his True Shape.

Specious Pretences, and the Artifice of Words, have in all Ages gone a great way to Amuse Innocent People; and there has never been found a Time of such Universal Light, when Mens Understandings have not been to be Deceiv'd by Humane Cunning——That these Men have had too much Success already in these Things, is but too True; but that they should expect to find any of these Weak sort of People in the

Ensuing

Enslaving Parliament, is such an Affront upon the House, as, I hope, may serve to quicken them in the preventing it, if it does not rouse their Temper to express some Resentment.

If any Man ask me, How I know this is in the Design? I'll be as plain in telling him that, as the Design it self; even because *Knives* are generally *Fools*; because the Gentlemen are so secure of the Success, they cannot contain their Satisfaction, but tell the Joy themselves; and so according to Custom, betray their Folly and Project both together.

Ask a High Churchman, *Well, Sir, What do you Design next? What will you bring the Bill to the House again?* He Answers readily, *No, no, but we'll bring you an Equivalent;* and then it comes out; *We'll bring you something, you shall not have the Face to Reject, which shall lay the Foundation of what we Desire, and do our Business, and yours too.*

The short of this Story is this, That this Party have Dress'd up the same Old Spectre in Fine New Cloaths; and this time you are to expect to be presented with a Bill, Entitled, *An Act for the Security of the Protestant Religion, and of the Church of England.* Now as some Wise Gentlemen in the former Ministry, could find a Way to make a Sacramental Test Clause upon *Dissenters*, agree with a Bill, *To prevent the Growth of Popery in Ireland;* by which all those Gentlemen who spent their Estates in Defence of *London-Derry*, and of the *Protestant Religion in Ireland*, are turn'd out of Office, in order to prevent Popery; Why may not it as well Correspond with the Security of the Church of England, to prevent her fellow Protestants Conforming to her, and to keep those out, that would come in, and so Encrease the Schism, as they call it, and widen the Breach among Protestants; for the Security of the Protestant Religion?

Well, Gentlemen, but under this Cover; a great many well-meaning Gentlemen, are supposed to be drawn in, who cannot have the Face to give their Vote against a Law, for the Security of the Protestant Religion; and this is the General Use of Titles; but no Man will say this is any Compliment to the Understanding of our Senators; and I can-

not but think they must be Concern'd at it, at least they will, I question not, concern themselves the more to Examine nicely into the Meaning, as well as Title of whatever comes before them.

In the presenting this New *Mimick of the Occasional Bill*, I promise to my self a great Satisfaction, in hearing that the Gentlemen who bring it into the House, will Undertake to prove the Reality of that *Non-Entity*, which they have fill'd our Ears with the Noise of, but which I could never yet see any Reality in; I mean, *The Danger of the Church* — And this I expect, because it cannot be Rational to offer a Bill to the House, for the Security of what is not in Danger; if this Danger can be proved, then their Work is done, and we are all content the House should be Judge; and yet whether the Church be in Danger, or not in Danger, this Bill seems to me very useless: For,

1. If the Church be not in Danger, the Bill for her Security, can be of no use; and I am perswaded, our House of Commons will not spend their Time in making Acts that signify nothing.

2. If the Church be in Danger, who is it from? It must be either from the *Protestants* or the *Papists*; If from the *Papists*, make what Acts you please against that Danger, we have nothing to say to it; and think you would do well to make an Act against the Church of England's being Reconciled to the *Gallican Church of Rome*, as some, who call themselves Churchmen, have already proposed; but if the Danger of the Church is from her *Protestant Dissenters*, why then, Gentlemen, you ought to make such Acts of Parliament, as may open the Church Doors to them, lessen their Numbers, and bring them to a General Conformity; but to make an Act to Drive them farther off, to keep them out, that would come in, and lay more stumbling Blocks in their way; this can never be for the Security of the Church, but serves rather to Confirm that Truth, which I have often Asserted, viz. That these Gentlemen, who so Violently cry out of the *Dissenters* Schism and Separation, yet really do not Desire they should Conform; for as Occasional Conformity is a step to Total

tal Conformity, he that Desires the last, would accept of every Degree of it, and Encourage the Advances People make towards it; in hopes that Time and Circumstances might bring them, or at least their Posterity, over to a Total Conformity.

This being, I think, plain, that the Design is the same, whatever outlide is put upon it; I cannot doubt, but our *English* Gentlemen Entrusted by the Nation, with the Security of their Liberties and Religion, will be careful not to be Wheedled and Imposed upon with false Colours of Things, but will still show their Resentment at the Design, in whatsoever Dress or Colour, it may be brought before them.

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